Development of environment projects in Maharashtra

2814. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of financial assistance provided by Government to Maharashtra Government for development and promotion of environment projects during the last two years;

(b) whether the funds provided by Government have been fully utilized by the State Government for the purpose; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The Government of Maharashtra was provided with financial assistance for development and promotion of environment projects under the following schemes:—

1. National river Conservation Plan.
2. National Air Quality Monitoring Programme.
3. Zoning Atlas.
4. National Water Quality Monitoring Programme.
5. National Lake Conservation Plan.

The funds provided to the State Government during the last two years for the purpose and the funds utilized by them are as under:-

Year	Amount released	Amount utilized
2000-2001	Rs. 12.20 crores	Rs. 4.78 crores
2001-2002	Rs. 19.51 crores	Rs. 16.31 crores

Population control of leopards

2815. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of a quantum jump in the leopard population from 1324 to 1961 in Uttaranchal and the increasing incidence of human beings falling prey to man-eaters in the recent years;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to adopt some sort of

population control measures to check the increasing number of leopards keeping in view the enormous depletion of forest cover and disappearance of herbivorous;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttaranchal has reported that the population of leopard has increased in the State from 1324 to 1961. However, it will not be appropriate to attribute in increased incidence of human killings by leopards to this increase in population. The study conducted by Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun has identified the following reasons for the increase in number of human killings:—

(i) Reduction in prey base due to increased poaching of herbivorous.

(ii) Large scale forest fires.

(iii) Degradation of wildlife habitat.

Most of the incidents of human killings have been reported from the areas where forests have degraded severely and the area in invaded by weeds like Lantana and Parthenium. The measures suggested by the above study for preventing human killings by leopards are—

(i) Clearing the bushes like Lantana and Parthenium and other species around human habitations.

(ii) Refrain from going into the forests between dusk and dawn.

(iii) Prevent forest fires.

(d) Does not arise.

Prevention of forest fires

2816. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken to prevent forest fires in Negava Hole, Bandipur National Park and other forests of Karnataka;

(b) whether it is a fact that this season, *i.e.*, 2002 the drying up of